Max Horkheimer's Early Views of the German Bourgeoisie

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ABSTRACT

Horkheimer's early views of the German bourgeoisie open possibilities of exploring other concepts such as micro-history, web of life, and capitalism as world-ecology, as analytical categories to *neo*-critique of capital today. Attention is also given to Horkheimer's relationship with the world and in particular early academia, were the socio-historical environments from which he drew influences to formulate his socio-philosophical thinking. His treatment of the stratified, thus exploitive bourgeois society, is based for example on capital, power and class structure – all of which (and many more) are part of his 'key conceptual tools of domination' that were directly responsible for the unnecessary and surplus suffering of the less fortunate in society, whilst those on top, lived off endless capitalist accumulation and irrationally towards self-destruction. Thus: Horkheimer's early writings reveal aspects of the essence of value in (of) capital in the 21st century which is now believed to in a state of global ecological crises.

'My own thoughts tend to move in the
direction of saying that good people are
dying out' (Max Horkheimer 12 March 1956)

Key words: bourgeoisie, capital, domination, exploitation, poor, working class, capital as world-ecology, web of life.

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1. Introduction

In response to interest following an earlier article on how Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) viewed the German working class (Engelbrecht 2015), it seems logic to also attend to his early formulations about the German bourgeoisie. The suggestion is that Horkheimer's relative disposition towards the materially well-off in German society (covering the period from his earliest writings up to and including his inaugural lecture on 24 January 1931 for this article) should be read together with the German working class article.

Much of Horkheimer's descriptions of the functioning of the German bourgeoisie can be studied against the backdrop of what Moore (Velednitsky 2017: 2) 'has been premised on "cheap nature" and the logic of cheapening. And that doesn't mean low in price, but means to cheapen, to treat with less dignity, to degrade, or to disrespect the work and life' of the working class.

During the early years (1924 to 1931) of the Institut für Sozialforschung (at the University of Frankfurt am Main), the intellectual and research interests were primarily directed towards the prevailing bourgeois socio-economic substructures (Jay 1996: 5; 6; 12; 15; 16; 18; 21). For instance, in the mid-1920s Horkheimer (1978: 61–62) wrote 'The Impotence of the German Working Class'; Felix Weil's doctorate dealt with the practical implementation problems of socialism; Pollock's doctorate (1923) explored Marx's monetary theory; The Grünberg *Archiv* housed a wealth of material about the history of the labour movement, and Franz Borkenau's 1926/27-lectures probed the ideological changes that were associated with the rise of capitalism. In addition, John Abromeit (2011: 211) also dealt with a comprehensive empirical study at the Institute about the German workers. This study was officially directed by Erich Fromm in 1929. In these writings, the 'forces of production' – in traditional Marxist interpretations – refer to labour power, raw materials, tools, and techniques used in the organisatig of workers (Rader 1979: 12; Federn 1971: 7–21). Lastly, in Horkheimer's inaugural lecture (when he officially took over as director of the Institute), he 'envisaged the continuation of the independent research activities of individual colleagues in the areas of theoretical economics, economic history, and the history of the labor movement' (Horkheimer 1993: 14).

In Marxist language of the time, the material conditions of life were embedded in the economic structure of society in which different property relations prevailed. These groups of economic relations determined the specific forms of the state and social consciousness as expressed through sentiments, thoughts, illusions and views of the world. Such certainly did not have its origins in the Industrial Revolution as tradition theory purports (Henderson 1969; Kemp 1989; Black 1967).

Even before the outbreak of World War I, Horkheimer was critical of the German war effort and criticized everything associated with it (Horkheimer 2007: 15, 17) as upper-middle class or bourgeois. Although critical towards the German bourgeoisie from a young age, Horkheimer and other Institute members 'never abandoned the life-style of the haute bourgeoisie' (Jay 1996: 36) that they lived. A

few cryptic examples in this regard will suffice. By 1914 Horkheimer's father (Moritz) already counted amongst the small group of about 250 millionaires in Frankfurt and in so-doing came 'to embody the promise of the liberal capitalism that was transforming the economy' (Abromeit 2011: 19) following World War I. Furthermore, Moritz Horkheimer 'placed his factory in the service of the war effort, producing badly needed textiles' (Abromeit 2011: 20, 29). But around 1919, Horkheimer viewed his father as a *Kriegsprofiteur* and in 'the radical circles in which Max Horkheimer began to move at this time, the *Kriegsprofiteur* was one of the most hated symbols of the Wilhemine Germany' (Abromeit 2011: 50). Nevertheless, by his own admission, Horkheimer wrote about his own good material fortunes that as 'the only son of the industrialist Moritz Horkheimer, I was intended from the very first year of my life to become my father's successor as director of an industrial company' (Wiggershaus 2007: 41) – a lucrative career path he actively resisted and finally rejected. After all, Germany was by 1914, generally regarded as 'one of the world's three greatest industrial nations' (Craig 1971: 352–353).

On 22 August 1918, Horkheimer (2007: 14) wrote about (his future wife) Rosa Riekher's 'propensity for enjoying a comfortable life'. In addition, when Horkheimer and his life-long friend Friedrich Pollock decided to enter university in 1919, they 'moved into a large apartment in one of Munich's affluent quarters. Horkheimer's parents were still supporting him financially' (Abromeit 2011: 42) at this point of his life. A few years later during the mid-1920s, Horkheimer wrote a short piece 'Either – Or' that dealt with the lack of money/financial security in everyday life. He wrote as follows: 'Total impotence, a withering of all good qualities and the development of all bad ones will mark our own and our family's existence, should we lose our financial security in this society' or if 'my money and my income' (Horkheimer 1978: 43, 44) were to be jeopardized. Lastly, before and during their exile years in the U.S., Horkheimer and Pollock made sure that they and a few of the members of the inner circle of the Institute were financially taken care of. Horkheimer and Pollock at least, lived in relative financial independence (Jay 1996: 289) for the rest of their lives until their comfortable retirement in 1958 to the Swiss town of Montagnola (Jay 1993: 287).

2. Horkheimer's bourgeois world

Horkheimer termed his life-time the 'bourgeois epoch' (Engelbrecht 2016) 'or modern bourgeois capitalist society' (Abromeit 2011: 17) – together with at least a further two dozen other synonyms that he used interchangeably and inconsistently. But just who are the 'tottering idols' (Horkheimer 1978: 17), those 'horrible' people who are 'on top in this society' (Horkheimer 1978: 21) that he so often referred to and critiqued in this 'bourgeois epoch' (Horkheimer 1978: 144)?

Horkheimer's critique of the world around him dates back to a young age. In a letter to Pollock dated 9 September 1912, Horkheimer expressed 'his general dissatisfaction with the social world of the bourgeoisie' (Abromeit 2011: 7). At the time he was 17 only years old. His criticism spared no-

one – be they capitalist industrialists, some of whom were in large-scale industries and who lived the good life at the expense of the 'little people' (Horkheimer 1978: 18; 47; 50–52; 109). According to him, even bourgeois theatre turned 'the problems of the class struggle into objects of shared contemplation and discussion' (Horkheimer 1978: 55). For Horkheimer (1978: 54) theatre 'reflects the struggles in the real world, and it is not impossible that it may one day help to create the atmosphere of action'. On the other hand, he suggested that the bourgeoisie knows how to deal with this. Horkheimer (1978: 55) wrote:

> 'Long before conditions in the real world become such that oppositional plays might really pose a danger, the bourgeois theaters stop putting them on. They know why.'

Horkheimer explained that: 'Bourgeois meant exploiter, bloodsucker, and it was meant to characterize all those who were interested in maintaining the bad social order' (Horkheimer 1978: 67; 29; 30; 57; 65) – in other words, in a society that is badly ordered. They are the 'feuding tycoons of the various capitalist power constellations […] the lesser magnets, the large landowners […], layers of professionals, smaller employees, political stooges, the military and the professors, the engineers and heads of office' (Horkheimer 1978: 66). In fact, he wrote that we live in '[t]he world [that] is the house of the ruling class' (Horkheimer 1978: 73). The bourgeoisie, such as social democrats, architects and businessmen in large-scale industry (Horkheimer 2007: 13) control the 'sophisticated instruments' and the 'key conceptual techniques of domination' (Horkheimer 1978: 17; 37) in the capitalist bourgeois world. The ultimate outcome of these instruments of domination that are in the hands of the bourgeoisie, gives rise to unnecessary and shared suffering in society (Horkheimer 1978: 18). For the sake of context, and without wanting to repeat aspects of Horkheimer's concept of suffering (Engelbrecht 2014a), his notion of 'key conceptual techniques of domination', can cryptically be listed by provisionally identifying at least nine of those techniques of domination.

Ideology is perceived as tool for generalised brainwashing that represents the symbols of imperialism. Both are protected, for example, by fear-inspiring guards (Horkheimer 1978: 17; 48) at penitentiaries, and the police. But without facts to counter generalized perceptions in life, as upheld by the bourgeoisie, to the contrary, ordinary people enter the 'domain of the ideological forces that control even intellectual life' (Horkheimer 1978: 64–65; Horkheimer 1993: 313–388). Therefore, the prevailing limitations (or not) of an ideology are judged by its 'appropriateness for their time' (Horkheimer 1993: 147). The associated and ideologically based 'ideas which are an important component in the apparatus of domination of the ruling class' (Horkheimer 1978: 27), mislead and control the masses that confine them to a life of 'slavish indignation' (Horkheimer 1978: 55). To such ends, the *systems and structure* that exist in society regulate its capital and the relative availability and dependency thereon (Horkheimer 1978: 18; 46–47) in an uneven and ideological manner. This is

reflected in the grades and scale of the application of the judiciary (Horkheimer 1978: 28) that protect the interests of the rich and simultaneously exploit the rest. It is therefore clear that justice can be improved upon (Horkheimer 1978: 32) because the means to do so do exist. In what format? In the format of science. But science is conflicted. Meanwhile, measures of injustice are confirmed or institutionalized (Horkheimer 1978: 36) when 'law becomes the expression of […] power' (Horkheimer 1978: 71) of those in the upper layers of society who create, control and perpetuate them. Those in society that cause suffering, ensure that nothing interferes with the mechanisms of control (Horkheimer 1978: 42) that uphold the bourgeois system. Even sympathizers with the proletariat 'might be murdered should civil war break out' (Horkheimer 1978: 45) because they are the enemy of the bourgeoisie. Bourgeois institutions of society, for example, theatres, are tools in die hands of state organs (Horkheimer 1978: 54). Colonies are also structures with its own systems of domination (Hokheimer 1978: 66). But, colonies and colonization are not just the spaces of oppression and exploitation, but colonization is also the continuous process of infiltrating society by the bourgeois to subject even its own people – regardless of being poor (Engelbrecht 2012) for its own material interests. 'Such is the world' where these relationships bear the stamp as 'matter-of-factness' (Horkheimer 1978: 83, 108). *Twentieth century technology* is unevenly developed, distributed and available in and for society. For the bourgeoisie, this leads to 'unlimited possibilities', but for the rest, to 'general suffering' (Horkheimer 1978: 19). Horkheimer argued that '[t]his society certainly has available the human and technical means to abolish the most blatant forms of physical wretchedness' (Horkheimer 1978; 28). By not doing so, it equates to the 'eclipse of reason'. For Horkheimer (1978: 83) '[w]here Europe's political boundaries do not define the conflicting spheres of interest of hostile, multinational economic groups, they function almost exclusively as a general ideological means of domination and a propaganda device of the armaments industry', for instance. 'In its origins, bourgeois science is inextricably linked to the development of technology and industry […] But society is not just based on the domination of nature in the narrower sense […] it is equally based on the domination of human beings by other human beings' (Horkheimer 1993: 316). One can ask the question: 'Whom does the science of politics serve?' (Horkheimer 1993: 318). The answer: the bourgeoisie and its state. In bourgeois times *modes of expression* in unclear ways by those who pretend to know what they are talking about (Horkheimer 1978: 20) are communicated through language as a tool in the struggles between classes. But there is also a downside to this. Language is either an infinite tool or an illusion. Horkheimer (1978: 75) gave the following example: 'In post-war Germany, the translation of Marxism into the academic idiom was a step toward breaking the will of the workers to fight capitalism'. The result is a social hierarchy that allows the wealthy to get ahead in life at the expense of lower level citizens (Horkheimer 1978: 21). As a result, it is therefore necessary for those who do not belong to the bourgeoisie, to at least have good relations with the powerful (Horkheimer 1978: 24). But when they do not do so, then they would find themselves in the hands and at the mercy of the bourgeoisie who wields economic power. The practical result is that a life of

dependency (Horkheimer 1978: 53) on work sets in. In this way work becomes an instrument of capitalist propaganda (Horkheimer 1978: 83) and control. Horkheimer (1978: 30) formulated this as follows:

> 'That work in the service of the ruling class is, in the main, useful does not preclude activities which are of little or no benefit to society as a whole but which primarily or exclusively prop up bad society. […] This applies not only to leading positions in the actual apparatus of suppression and the large-scale ideological institutions such as the military, the police, the church, philosophy and economics, but even to mere attitudes and beliefs.'

Work is therefore both a means and an end that needs to be upheld by the bourgeoisie and the worker, although for different reasons and through different mechanisms. Apart from being dependent on work – or die – it is central to structuring of society for bourgeois and worker. After all, Hokheimer (1978: 84) characterized the present times in bourgeois terms that '"those that don't want to work shouldn't eat"'. Furthermore, work is not alien to the use of *violence* (Horkheimer 1978: 22), because 'should someone raise his hand against the monster of cartel capitalism, he will no longer find a place to hide from the claws of power' (Horkheimer 1978: 82). This means that bourgeois-induced work and violence are not mutually exclusive – 'He […] inculcates in the masses that it is only *fear* that keeps them from destroying the system' (Horkheimer 1978: 33). The real world, according to Horkheimer, is amongst other things, intricately linked to how present conditions are badly organised. Tottering idols and their flimsy ideologies are kept in place by 'zeal and terror'. But most of all, the fear for losing a job (Horkheimer 1978: 17; 48), is probably the ultimate fear. Why? Because, in a discussion between Horkheimer and Adorno on 12 March 1956, some explanation is as follows:

> Horkheimer: 'Man is worth something only as long as he works. This is where the concept of freedom comes in.'
> Adorno: 'Freedom from work.'
> Horkheimer: 'Freedom is not the freedom to accumulate, but the fact that I have no need to accumulate' (Adorno and Horkheimer 2011: 23).

At the hand of the bourgeoisie, the worker not only loses employment, but also his/her self-worth, and dignity, personal freedom and space in which everyday choices can be made. Therefore, the bourgeoisie compromises the life of the poor not only in material terms.

Bourgeois morality and *religion* protects the rich but makes harsh judgement on society's poor (Horkheimer 1978: 54). Horkheimer later (1978: 123) wrote about the 'profound pragmatism at the core of world religions' – they being '[b]asically […] as synthetic, artificial, manipulatory as the

trashy sects like Christian science'. According to Horkheimer, upholders of religion 'think more of killing than of being killed' (Horkheimer 1978: 38). He argues in this manner because he also seems to be convinced that the belief that God puts the image of himself in the soul of other people is a conflicted one. Instead, it is based on the reality that impressions from the outside world, enters an individual. But religion is part and parcel of the 'system' – one that affects everything – one of organised 'exploitation on a world-wide scale'. Religions should not be treated lightly, in particular, criticism of religion (Horkheimer 1978: 17; 27; 28–29; 61). The gap between Christian morality and the real actions of Christianity is vast. The ruling class finds all sorts of well-known moral arguments to justify their actions, for instance, killing in war; 'murder of political opponents and all sort of villany can be reconciled' (Horkheimer 1978: 88). However, towards the end of his life, Horkheimer's optimism towards a better world has faded. He wrote to Marcuse dated 17 December 1972: 'Let us hope we'll see each other well again in 1973. I'm already quite old and am getting more and more stupid.' The following month (January 1973) Marcuse replied: 'No. Max—we're not getting more and more stupid, this world is terrible and is becoming ever more terrible, "beyond or capacity of imagination"' (Horkheimer 1993: 374).

We have seen that the capitalist bourgeois system affects everything and everyone in life. Not even *bourgeois morality* is spared. Instead, it is a tool that assists to prop up bourgeois ideology at the expense of the working class. In fact, 'bourgeois morality functions extremely well' Horkheimer wrote (1978: 54). For centuries capitalist practice operated under a cloak to divert truth to the corners of darkness (Horkheimer 1978: 18) in civil society. The modern so-called 'unlimited possibilities' – be they technology or science – do not 'benefit the worker' as is pretended. Even ancient Greek scientists 'sail under false colors. He did not claim that his catapults would benefit friend and enemy alike' wrote Horkheimer (1978: 34) to illustrate his point.

Similarly, not all people in society have the same privileges as the bourgeois. The working class does not 'benefit' from medicine in the same manner as the bourgeoisie because of its uneven distribution and affordability. Furthermore, the prevailing injustices cannot be equally critiqued. There even seems to be a 'tacit agreement among the fortunate ones' (Horkheimer 1978: 31) to be protected by their bourgeois morality and level and scope of criticism. Inferred 'agreements' these days include the following: the upholding of bourgeois ideology by bourgeois cronies; 'agreement' that criticism of 'the system' leads to wretched life circumstances; 'agreement' that one then cannot get 'ahead' unless being in the 'good books' of the wealthy. In other words 'only the person that cooperates in maintaining [the material base] can expect rewards' (Horkheimer 1978: 29); 'agreement' that the endless splitting of fields of study into esoteric ones for self-advancement of academics and superficial socialization with 'barren intellectuals', all underline the conviction of a world-wide capitalist bourgeois society of the early 20th century (and thereafter) 'that helps assure the continued existence of an unjust order' (Horkheimer 1978: 29). The bourgeoisie runs a 'slave economy' (Horkheimer 1978: 57) protected, justified and embedded in its own morality after its own

image. This bourgeois morality is reluctant to 'judge the life of the rich, and [is] nowhere as strict as toward those that want to eliminate poverty' (Horkheimer 1978: 54). As a result injustices continue. It is under these conditions – Horkheimer (1978: 82) calls these conditions 'today's world' – where 'bad superiors' do not have a healthy relationship with the employees because of the irrationality of the dependence of the subordinates 'in an outdated class society' (Horkheimer 1978: 82). Bad superiors do not realize that this relationship with the employees is hindered by the fact that they are not really fit to be in charge of an organization or those being managed by them. As a consequence work suffers and eventually people of different classes do not even talk to one another (Horkheimer 1978: 82–83). This is a typical characteristic of a class-stratified society where people look at each other but do not 'see' each other, or talk to but does not hear each other.

Inherent in the above is also a healthy set of bourgeois *denials*. Bourgeois denial supersedes the 'optimistic denial' of the lower classes that they are not surrounded by 'darkness' (Horkheimer 1978: 31) and suppression (Horkheimer 1978: 85). Such 'truths' cannot be told in 'simple terms', nor the one that God placed 'an image of others into the sole of each individual' (Horkheimer 1978: 17). Bourgeois 'truths' deny that their world is one of shared (Horkheimer 1978: 18) and unnecessary (Horkheimer 1978: 74) or surplus suffering (Abromeit 2011: 160, 177; Engelbrecht 2014a). The bourgeois pretence that people actually 'communicate' with one another, by implication denies that life for the poor is not an easy one in a distorted capitalist society (Horkheimer 1978: 18). Consider bourgeois science: it is the outflow of so-called 'unlimited possibilities' that is also supposed to 'benefit the worker' but is, in reality 'a hypocritical justification concerning the "necessity" for this unending scourge' (Horkheimer 1978: 21). For instance, bourgeois violence has many manifestations and forms of justification for its existence and use but will not be refuted by them. Similarly, bourgeois capitalist ideologies retains the upper hand in society whilst uncompromisingly rejects the deployment of the prevailing injustices because instead, it 'divinizes greatness, productivity, personality, potency […], but rejects what they bring forth' (Horkheimer 1978: 22, 26). The bourgeoisie in their own eyes, was neither responsible nor accountable of any subsequent misgivings.

The wealthy, or 'big people' in 'high society' (Horkheimer 1978: 18) are the privileged with better opportunities in life because '[w]hile up above, the relationship between the exploiting individual and the exploitive activity', acts at the expense of 'those on the lower levels' – the 'little people' of society, the 'deluded masses under capitalism' (Horkheimer 1978: 42). For instance, 'the millionaire, and especially his wife' develops 'all sorts of admirable qualities' (Horkheimer 1978: 21) to advance their subjective material well-being and social standing in society as it now is. Similarly, the 'carefully manicured hand of a cabinet minister who issues a minor order affecting the execution of a sentence' (Horkheimer 1978: 22), has the life of the 'small people' in his hands. Still, the bourgeoisie with its capitalist system, 'rejects what it brings forth' – instead, they 'find their places in its hall of honor' (Horkheimer 1978: 25). For example, Horkheimer places Nietzsche next to the 'utopian aristocrats'. Apparently Nietzsche 'wants to preserve weakness, cowardice, obedience' amongst the

proletariat, hence he 'inculcates in the masses that it is only fear that keeps them from destroying the system' (Horkheimer 1978: 32–33) – meaning the capitalist system. This makes value of work and life a relative category.

3. Value and labour

Whilst the Horkheimer family benefitted from the war effort because Max's father placed their factories at the disposal of the war production requirements, Max, on the other hand, criticized the industrialist, Mr Krupp (on a number of occasions), who's production time is not of the same value as that of others, nor is that of a well-off banker (Horkheimer 1978: 22–23). Horkheimer did the same in a short story about a millionaire and his poor acquaintance (Horkheimer 1978: 33), and again with the death of a millionaire compared to that of a proletarian (Horkheimer 1978: 39). In fact, Horkheimer often criticized millionaires in society.

This social stratification between those on top of society and those who are not, is probably best expressed in the following when Horkheimer wrote:

> 'The real bourgeois has the capacity to look at all things objectively and in post-war Germany, that even extends to revolution. Once he begins to reflect objectively about it or, rather, its political preparation, it seems like any other activity within the context of social reality and is judged accordingly. Because in capitalist production the entrepreneur thinks less about the use value of its products than about ingenious manufacturing and selling techniques, he is less interested in the content than the execution when he makes and objective judgement about any social activity whatever' (Horkheimer 1978: 39).

The above has some implications regarding the German bourgeoisie. Take for instance Horkheimer's example of an influential, powerful director of a penitentiary. When he interacts with an 'important or well-connected visitor', he then pretentiously behaves in a manner very differently than when they 'deny an inmate the most insignificant alleviation' (Horkheimer 1978: 43). In other words, the 'little man' is at the mercy of 'the great capitalist' who has the power to objectively influence the course of social forces. In so doing, the powerful in the upper levels of the bourgeois world determines the outcome of material conditions of the lower ranks of society. And what is the outcome? Horkheimer answers as follows: 'We certainly cannot maintain that men are born equal, and who can say how many behavioural nuances we inherit' (Horkheimer 1978: 46). In this sense, '[m]ost people are born into a prison' and the 'higher the social stratum in which a person is born, the better the chance for […] development becomes' (Horkheimer 1978: 46–47) – because 'power gives man substance and develops it' to the extent that it even gives the 'modern entrepreneur, the trust director' protection

against all sorts of criticism, e.g. of ill health that might influence his work performance (Horkheimer 1978: 47; 49). But the 'little man' is not so fortunate. Even in theatres or universities 'the bourgeoisie is given the chance to consider itself a competent judge of the interests of the proletariat' (Horkheimer 1978: 55) – where the bourgeois pretends to know better – whereas the 'little man' must be thankful when 'the Baron Rothschild […] gave the socialist a coin and told him: "Be satisfied with this, that's much more than you would get if everything were divided up"' (Horkheimer 1978; 74). Of course those who hold positions as board members attend banquets and 'the board chairmen pile up profits' (Horkheimer 1978; 75; 78). The rest are mere onlookers. Likewise, entrepreneurs spend more time at work – especially at times when profits are calculated. They find it surprising that their subordinates are not equally enthusiastic to voluntary spend more time at work (Horkheimer 1978: 88). After all, board members live in an irrationally organised bourgeois society which regulates its own existence at the expense of fellow humans.

Although the value of humans are closely linked to the ideas that people have of one another in society, the impressions of people of the world around them, as well as the images of human consciousness about the outside world, it is more the *attitudes of people* that distinguish between for instance worries and joy; anxiousness and aggression, and the slavish or superior human qualities (Horkheimer 1978: 18). What is unattainable for the poor is considered cheap by the privileged. This means that societal hierarchy is positively linked to decreasing wealth – the 'moral worth of those that fight for it increases'. Where are inhuman qualities expressed? The answer is: In the lower levels of bourgeois life (Horkheimer 1978: 21). Why? Because 'although there are some social spheres above the true proletariat where a certain decency can survive for a time, there can be no doubt that getting ahead is a poor index of moral scruples' (Horkheimer 1978: 22). Wealthy people will do anything to advance themselves. The bourgeois entrepreneur, after all, is not concerned with the use value of his products, and also not with morality, but only with selling (Horkheimer 1978: 39) the fruits of the labour of someone else. Essentially, 'all life conditions relating to work in the end […] are driven by material need' (Horkheimer 1993: 324). Instead, Horkheimer wrote: 'Socialism is a better, more effective form of society' (Horkheimer 1978: 35); 'Socialism does not "follow" from economic laws discovered by Marx' (Horkheimer 1978: 35), rather, '[o]ne has to fight for socialism' (Horkheimer 1978: 36) since it requires 'an all [...] more desperate determination to make it come true' (Horkheimer 1978: 37; 73–75). As a result, socialism is a purposeful human construct.

In the workplace for instance, the bourgeois employer dismisses a worker for having wasted some of his time. Unproductivity affects profit. The time wasted of the employer is in an inverse manner, of far less significance to the employer than the consequences for the worker. Thus, according to Horkheimer, 'a minute in the life of an unemployed person does not have the same value as the administrator's minute. One should figure out how many hundreds of lives of workers would have to be added up to equal the value of a moderately well-off banker's day' (Horkheimer 1978: 23). For some, value equates to nothing because they already lead a life of starvation (Horkheimer 1978: 31)

that ends in death (Horkheimer 1978: 42, 43). Inequality is perpetuated along with accumulation and exploitation by extinction as the means for existence. As a result, the death of a millionaire is not the same as that of a proletarian (Horkheimer 1978: 39) because inequalities are perpetuated, purposefully promoted and finally, actively protected. For instance, the rich can prolong life; the poor cannot because of the unequal access to medicine.

In a sense, this relative value of people can be summarized by the following observations. The industrialist bourgeoisie views labour as a production input-cost that needs to be reduced in order to affect the mix of productive forces that impact on the profitable outcome of the productive process. Therefore, capital is a world-ecology in the web of life (Moore 2015: 4) in which the labourer finds himself amongst other people of society in an unequal basis. In particular, the capitalist bourgeois represents humanity as a natural *longue durée* force in the process of labour accumulation of a specific kind: 'increase the army of unemployed' (Horkheimer 1978: 73); then employ just enough labour to do the job based on an exploitive cheap labour basis in order to produce surplus value for the capitalist. As a result, the value of labour is diminishing in comparison to increased surplus value (profit) for the bourgeoisie.

The problem with cheap labour is that the bourgeois capitalist forces it to become so cheap that the worker cannot even afford the travelling cost of transport to his/her place of work in order to earn an income (Horkheimer 1978: 23). In so-doing, the bourgeoisie places human value in a hierarchy (Horkheimer 1978: 99) of descending order and at the same time negated equal human value (Horkheimer 1978: 76) to the levels of unemployment for some; where the socially ostracised face economic ruin, and are reduced into stunted misery. From the resultant wretched situations where hunger, starvation and death are experienced, there is little chance for escape, and suicide rates are closely linked to inhumane material conditions. Under these conditions, no human value can be attracted. (Around 40 years later, although in a different context, Frantz Fanon dealt with the wretched on Earth in great detail.) After all, 'the entrepreneur thinks less of the use value of his products (Horkheimer 1978: 39). Stated differently, according to Horkheimer (1978: 69), 'Capital is concerned with profit, the proletariat with the liberation of mankind' that to this day seems mutually exclusive.

There are a few further remarks to be made about the value of people as dictated by forces beyond their control. For Horkheimer 'the individual's valuations are determined by society (Hokheimer 1978: 70). People and their value relations in the web of life, is everywhere and unevenly spread in place and time. Such value inequality brings about contested spaces that are central to geographies of power, capital and nature (Moore 2017: 326). This makes contestation inherent in human class organization as a producer and as a product in the web of life (Moore 2015) which cannot escape the history of *longue-durée.* For Moore, such dates back to the origins of capitalism in the mid-15th century, and for Horkheimer 'the bourgeois society […] was […] freeing itself from the fetters of the feudal system' (Hokheimer 1993: 314; Horkheimer 1978: 28).

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The ‘laws of value’ are defined as ‘those large-scale and long-run patterns that shape and cohere a civilization’ (Moore 2017: 327). But such coherence could not control oppression, appropriation and exploitation – Horkheimer referred to them as ‘key conceptual techniques of domination’ (Horkheimer 1978: 17). For the bourgeois, labor time (these days referred to as ‘socially necessary labour time’, see Moore 2017; 327) distinguishes between labour productivity as the driver for sustained competitiveness. Without the exploitation of labour power, the accumulation of capital and then the cheapening thereof, the capitalist individual and entrepreneur cannot survive. In so-doing, it finds ways to exploit Cheap Natures – including human nature, because, after all, it has already cheapened labour to practically nothing – ‘nothing’ meaning sub-human existence living conditions. The outcome of this is death. This means that ‘value does not work unless work is valued’ (Moore 2017: 328). Because the bourgeois does not value work, the value of value falls away. And because of the laws of diminishing value, capitalism needs to re-generate itself at a pace faster than value devaluation, or go bankrupt. The result is accelerated bourgeois exploitation on an ever-increasing scale. It restructures society at the expense of the lower classes at an unsustainable rate.

4 Horkheimer’s first encounters within academia

Horkheimer’s dominance of ‘the affairs of the Institute was unquestioned’ since ‘his power was also rooted in the structure of the Institut as it was originally conceived’ where ‘Marxism would be the ruling principle at the Institut’, wrote Martin Jay (1996: 11) more than two decades ago. In his inaugural lecture on 24 January 1931 (then aged 36), Horkheimer said:

> ‘If I now undertake to orient the work of the Institute toward new tasks after the lengthy illness of its director, I have the benefit not merely of the experience of his colleagues and of the collected literature, but also of the Institute charter which he inspired. According to that charter, the director named by the Minister is fully independent “in all aspects, … vis-á-vis the university administration as well as the sponsors,” and rather than a collegial administration there exists, as Grünberg liked to put it, a “dictatorship of the director.” It will thus be possible for me to make use of that which he created and, at least in narrow terms, together with his colleagues, to erect a dictatorship of planned work in place of the mere juxtaposition of philosophical construction and empirical research in social inquiry’ (Horkheimer 1993: 10–11).

Horkheimer’s prescriptive arrogance as reflected in the above is nothing new. In a letter to Riekher and Pollock dated 22 August 1918, Horkheimer (2007: 7–17) gave a number of strict personal

instructions to Pollock and Riekher about *what*, *how* and *in what order* Riekher was to read, based on what *he* decided her literary education should be. For instance: 'she is not supposed to study philosophy without me' (Horkheimer 2007: 10).

In addition, Horkheimer's own observations and frequent character assassination of the people that he critiqued or disagreed with, are rather far-fetched. As an example, of Gustave Flaubert's 1857-novel *Madam Bovary*, Horkheimer wrote: 'Madame Bovary's intelligence is certainly not above average', 'Karl's stupidity is touching. He's been stupid from the day he was born', and also 'We all know how tragic it is that our path leads us across the dull pain of intellectually limited individuals' (Horkheimer 2007: 7).

Not only did Horkheimer critiqued some German literature (Horkheimer 2007: 11) that he was familiar with, but in the same letter dated 22 August 1918, he also had strong, opinionated views about the German theatre-going public at the time. For instance,

> 'Some time ago I attended a performance of *Figaro.* They can't play Mozart here. […] they have no clue about Mozart' (Horkheimer 2007: 14). 'I saw a performance of Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* (unfortunately with the housekeeper) that was a totally unheard-of vulgarity. I didn't know what was worse: Ibsen, the actors, the musicians, or the audience. I can still forgive Ibsen because he at least meant well (which, however, is not an acceptable excuse in artistic matters); Grieg's music is lovely. But given the immaturity of the theatre public, the presentation is wretched in every way'. Lastly: 'By now I have a very low notion of the taste and the understanding of the local public' (Horkheimer 2007: 15).

However, of *himself*, Horkheimer wrote in a perceived egocentric and opinionated tone in the same letter as follows:

> 'In the meantime I've been to a small gathering at St.'s. Being there is painful for me even though it provides some diversion. I very quickly come to dominate in conversation with men in attendance. I become the centre of attention so quickly that they feel exposed in front of the girls and secretly hold this against me' (Horkheimer 2007: 15).

The above two examples give rise to, and fit in well with a last set of examples that pertain to his initial few months at university. These accounts have to do with Horkheimer's early interactions with various academics from the period immediately after his military discharge in the spring of 1918

(Abromeit 2011: 33). He attended universities – first at Munich for one semester, then Frankfurt, then Freiburg for two semesters, and finally back again at Frankfurt.

Sandwiched between his discharge from military service and entering university in the spring of 1919, Horkheimer and Pollock passed their *Abitur* (school-leaving examinations). Soon thereafter they entered the University of Munich in the spring and summer of 1919 to study psychology, philosophy and economics. Their attendance was sporadic (Abromeit 2011: 71) because amongst other things, they also had to prepare for their *Abitur*.

After one semester, they left Munich and the university. One of the reasons why Horkheimer left Munich was that he had been arrested twice in May 1919; once mistaken for Ernst Toller (a politician and writer: member of the Independent Social Democrat and Munich Soviet Government towards the end of World War I; sentenced to five years in prison, and emigrated in 1933 to the U.S.), and secondly, because 'life in Munich had become too dangerous for him' (Wiggershaus 2007: 44, 665). Pollock also got into trouble with the police for assisting a Russian to escape in May 1919 after the Munich Soviet Republic was overthrown (Wiggershaus 2007: 60–61).

Hereafter they went to Frankfurt. In the winter semester of 1919 Horkheimer attended a lecture of Professor Hans Cornelius at the University of Frankfurt am Main. He later wrote to Riekher that his 'own work is better' (Abromeit 2011: 54). Abromeit described Horkheimer's behaviour as 'bordering on downright arrogance' (Abromeit 2011: 54).

Horkheimer and Pollock left Frankfurt in the fall of 1920 and Cornelius sent Horkheimer with a letter of recommendation to study with Husserl for two semesters at the University of Freiburg. Horkheimer was 'deeply impressed when he met Husserl's assistant, Martin Heidegger' (Wiggershaus 2007: 45). Abromeit confirms this. But according to him, Horheimer later said in an interview that although he attended Heidegger's lectures for a year, he was more impressed with Husserl (Abromeit 2011: 59). In addition, Horkheimer 'and Pollock left derogatory notes on Heidegger's lectern to express their dissatisfaction' about how Heidegger spent the first three weeks of the seminar on the concept of 'introduction' in his lecture 'Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion' (Abromeit 2007: 59). Then, in the fall of 1921, Horkheimer and Pollock returned to Frankfurt (Abromeit 2011: 61).

Professor Friedrich Schumann, Horkheimer's first dissertation supervisor at Frankfurt, was next to be lambasted by Horkheimer. Dated 25 October 1921, Horkheimer wrote to Riekher that he introduced himself the previous day to Schumann who had to test him at the psychological institute on psychological philosophy. In Horkheimer's words:

> 'After a few minutes we had gotten into such an agitated discussion about a basic philosophical question that real mutual understanding appears to have been made impossible from the outset. Since at the moment I was thinking less about the purpose of my visit than the

> subject itself, I defended the truth against the idiotic, dogmatic, and long obsolete assertions of this gentleman very energetically, which is most likely unsuitable for a degree candidate. He became very angry, since I presumably bruised his vanity with various somewhat disrespectful and very pointed objections; he jumped up and paced up and down the room; and when he had no response at all to my objections, when I all too clearly pointed out his nonsense to him, he said he didn't understand, it was all too lofty for him, he could and would not go along with it. […] During the course of the conversation I had the impression, in any case, after my Freiburg experience, the intellectual level would, in any case, be too low for me. No participant in a Husserl seminar would have been permitted to speak the way this professor did without making himself ridiculous because of total incompetence' (Horkheimer 2007: 18).

Then about two weeks later Horkheimer wrote to Riekher in a letter dated 6 November 1921, that he and Schumann 'talked for an hour, the conversation in the form of my giving him a detailed lesson about some basic philosophical questions. He defended his position very carelessly' (Horkheimer 2007: 20–21). In addition, Horkheimer treated Cornelius with suspicion and said he 'unfortunately suspect Cornelius of doing more and more [to exploit him], and begrudge me my finder mind?' (Horkheimer 2007: 21). After three weeks, again in a letter again to Riekher dated 30 November 1921, Hokheimer further explained: 'I have little desire to continue concealing my own opinion in order not to attract the insults of some learned gentleman. It doesn't suit me to write things whose narrow boundaries are fixed a priori […]. I feel as if I am in a cage […]. The more philosophy captivates me, the more I distance myself from what is understood as philosophy at his university […]. I want to be and to create according to the principles of my own nature […]. I find Gelb to be pretty good; he's the only person with whom I am able to converse on the same level' (Horkheimer 2007: 22, 23). In the same letter, Horkheimer also reflected on his experience at Freiburg when he wrote:

> 'that Heidegger was one of the most significant personalities whose philosophy spoke to me. Do I agree with him? – How could I, since I actually only know one thing about him for sure: that for him the impulse to philosophy does not stem from intellectual ambition and a preconceived theory but springs anew each day from his own experience' (Horkheimer 2007: 22).

No doubt, Horkheimer, like 'most institute members maintained a certain aloofness from the urban cultural scene and the intellectual milieu it fostered' (Jay in Rasmussen 1996: 45). To underline this, a few examples will suffice. Around November 1918, 'Horkheimer was unwilling to translate his radical theoretical convictions directly into praxis. He continued to maintain his distance from the explosive political events of the time…' (Abromeit 2011: 42) Secondly, the years before Horkheimer became Cornelius's assistant 'he had carefully maintained his critical distance' (Abromeit 2011: 66). In the later 1920s after being appointed, Horkheimer's 'outspoken aphorisms demonstrated his unbroken determination to maintain some critical distance from the conservative German academy' (Abromeit 2011: 157). Abromeit (2011: 5) wrote: 'When his writings from the 1930s began to circulate once again in pirate editions during the tumultuous political climate of the 1960s, Horkheimer was reluctant to republish them. He finally did so only after distancing himself from them…'. Lastly, once in exile in the U.S. and for the duration thereof, including the period after his return to German, Horkheimer never gave up his intellectual and institutionalised independence. Leo Lowenthal puts it as follows: 'we remained an island, no doubt about that' (Heathwood 2013).

In a sense, Horkheimer's critique and even rejection of much of the world around him had to do with finding the 'truth' that he professed to seek from an early age. For example, 'we despise anyone who refuses to hear the truth! We are completely and consciously on the path to truth' (Horkheimer 2007: 14) or '[w]oe to the man who tells the truth in simple terms' (Horkheimer 1978: 17) he wrote in 1918 and mid-1920s respectively. These truths have been debased 'through the worst sort of capitalist practice which had been used as a cloak for centuries' (Horkheimer 1978: 18). Behind this cloak is the 'wealthy laymen', the participants of 'high society' (Horkheimer 1978: 20) who compete unscrupulously with each other so the '*he* can get ahead' (Emphasis in original. Horkheimer 1978: 21). Even the 'capitalist professor deny that any emotion enters their work. They don't want anyone to find out that they pursue wisdom for the sake of their career' (Horkheimer 1978: 53). For instance, the rich has up-market summer vacation property that they can frequent (Horkheimer 1978: 33); they can prolong their lives through medical treatment (Horkheimer 1978: 8), after all the rich 'cannot give the sick his health as a present' (Horkheimer 1978: 67); have discretionary time (Horkheimer 1978: 49); have access to work that does not bankrupt them (Horkheimer 1978: 55); has the law on their side (Horkheimer 1978: 71), and can settle marital conflict 'in ways that are not open to the poor' (Horkheimer 1978: 92). In addition, life has changed. Horkheimer wrote:

> 'Forty years ago' […] [t]hose who had a good time while mankind starved had a big belly […]'. Not only the sons and daughters of the big capitalists but they themselves are about to become muscular, slender people, models of harmonious proportions and self-restraint. The big belly has become the mark of small folk who have no chance to take up sports or massage. Usually, they are condemned to a sedentary life and pay for their small measure of well-being not only with the

> fear of a stroke but with justified contempt of the proletariat. Rockefeller is ninety years old, and plays golf' (Horkheimer 1978: 49).

Horkheimer's final sentence in his inaugural lecture reads: 'May the guiding impulse in this Institute be the indomitable will unswervingly to serve the truth!' (Horkheimer 1993: 14) and in his own words in conversation with Adorno in March 1956: 'for something to be true means that it is so constituted that everyone must acknowledge it' (Adorno and Horkheimer 2011: 6). But because bourgeois society is stratified at all levels, concerns about truth are an impossible feat. For the preface to the new 1969-edition of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno wrote that they

> 'do not stand by everything we said in the book in its original form. That would be incompatible with a theory which attributes a temporal core to truth as something invariable to the movement of history' (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002: xi).

About 19 months before his death, Horkheimer wrote to Martin Jay in December 1971 about his life-long devotion in finding truth (Horkheimer 2007: 370).

The pursuit of truth in a stratified society plays itself out in so-called 'philosophical' conversations. Sometimes 'wealthy laymen' of 'high society' profess to be engaged in topics of interest in the interest of 'truth', yet a closer look will reveal that they do so merely to 'advertise' themselves for a better job – academics do the same in pursuit to impress women or for career advancement, according to Horkheimer. No wonder that the most mundane topics are often only superficially discussed between participants not properly involved and 'that the participants do not really address each other' (Horkheimer 1978: 20). Such pompous 'capitalist practice' of 'clever talk' that has been 'a cloak for centuries', is mere personal competition and societal posturing for 'distracting attention from real problems' (Horkheimer 1978: 20) – problems that range from the everyday mundane sphere to that of the philosophical.

Finding the truth is cemented in critique of bourgeois society and its institutions and rationale. The Institute was a critical 'institution' for Horkheimer. Social philosophy was the 'medium'. Martin Jay (1996: 25) describes it best:

> 'Social philosophy, as Horkheimer saw it, would not be a single *Wissenschaft* (science) in search of immutable truth. Rather, it was to be understood as a materialist theory enriched and supplemented by empirical work, in the same way that natural philosophy was dialectically related to individual scientific disciplines. The Institut would therefore continue to diversify its energies without losing sight of its, interdisciplinary, synthetic goals.'

From the above it is suggested that there is no ‘immutable’ or ‘absoluteness’ of truth, but instead, each historical period has its own truth, entrenched in social conditions of the prevailing time and not outside of society of the day (Jay 1996: 63). Consequently, truth is linked to ‘social change’ (Jay 1996: 46) preserved in theory that follows human practice (Jay 1996: 64; Horkheimer 1978: 57). The problem, for Horkheimer (1978: 27), is that although ‘the structure of capitalist society forever transforms itself […] the basis of that society, economic relationships, are left untouched’. For him, ‘society is a totality which is “constantly restructuring itself”’ (Held 1980: 179) but since the bourgeois substructure remains static from which the poor cannot escape, is one of the reasons for Horkheimer’s critique of orthodox Marxism. This means that truth (non-truth) and injustices are linked to human societal relations ‘as members of a community’ (Horkheimer 1993: 1) that are badly organised in the capitalist world of the bourgeois epoch (Horkheimer 1993: 129–149). Even the state is ‘directly conditioned by the conflict of social interests’ (Horkheimer 1993: 4). Consequently, ‘only property arrangements stand in the way of this realization’ (Horkheimer 1978: 28) that ‘[n]on-religious values such as justice, freedom or truth are not taken seriously’ (Horkheimer 1978: 91) because the tottering bourgeois and its less stable ideologies, remain firmly in control.

The dilemma remains therefore whether weapons that ‘are instruments of evil omen […] seven hundred years before Christ’, or airplanes in the name of progress two thousand years after Christ, or ‘an Indian tribe before its medicine man’ the ‘sad thing is that many are suffering, and the danger is that this era will devour us’ (Horkheimer 2007: 17).

In summary, if one asks how did the bourgeoisie do it?, then the following excerpt is probably a reasonable substantiation:

> ‘According to Marxian theory the power of the ruling class has been based upon its monopolization of the means of production. Legal ownership was the ideological expression of the fact that a minority of people occupied a position which enabled them to exclude the rest of society from freely using the land or other instruments necessary for the continuation of social life on a given scale. The ruling class has absorbed the gifts of culture, that is to say, the difference between the total product of consumer goods and the bare necessities of life of those who produced them, and, though guided by uncontrolled social forces, has decided which kinds of goods are desirable and by which methods they have to be secured: either by hard labor alone or by the use of arms’ (Horkheimer 1943).

Conclusion

Studying the bourgeois and working class as two analytical categories, opens opportunities to employ methodological challenges of how micro-history can reveal how ordinary people lived during part of

the inter-war period. In this context, Horkheimer's *Dawn and Decline. Notes 1926–1931* and *1950–1969*, remains a most valuable secondary source because numerous short stories, plays aphorisms and other short writings by Horkheimer are in many instances, autonomous free-standing units that can be studied on their own. They open avenues to focus on the seemingly 'small' the 'mundane' and 'insignificant' (Apor 2017–2018: 185) under bourgeois life in the manner that Horkheimer described it. This is essentially the 'everyday micro-life of the ordinary peoples' that represents common life that is also not impertinent to power under bourgeois rule and how they lived. In doing so, the reduction of the scale of analysis to clear-cut small units (Apor 2007–2008; 190), reveals valuable social history. Horkheimer (1978: 33–34) describes in 'Rules of the Game', an imaginary discussion between an upper-class millionaire and his friend 'who merely makes a living' and how they pretend and lie to each other in this conversation to make-believe 'that both move on the same social plane'. Abromeit's (2011) study: *Horkheimer and die Foundations of the Frankfurt School* dealt with a good number of these writings of Horheimer. It would be unwise to repeat that here. However, if ever there was one levelling factor in the war-years before Horkheimer went to university, it was life *in* the war where rich and poor literally fought shoulder-to-shoulder Lewis 2014).

But the above pretences and that of capitalism as a closed economic system, which Horkheimer critiqued as being bourgeois in nature, has, in the eyes of contemporary *neo*-critique, reached a state of its own epochal crises (Moore 2016) as expressed in Moore's concept of the web of life (Moore 2015). Moore (2017: 2) continues: 'Instead of hiving off capitalism into something "economic" and then looking [as Horkheimer did] at all the terrible things that capitalism or industrial society has done […] we do something that includes that but moves deeper'. In this regards Horkheimer said in his inaugural lecture that 'the current intellectual situation, in which traditional disciplinary boundaries have been called into question and will remain unclear for the foreseeable future' Horkheimer 1993: 1). Describing capital as 'world-ecology' (Moore 2016) is just one example of current thinking about dissecting the limited capital-class structuring interpretation of society that Horkheimer dealt with. Of course, one cannot today, critique Horkheimer's work in light of today's insights, how he *should* have written *then*, but the past is always re-interpreted in view of new findings relevant to it.

At present, as Capitaloceneists delve deeper into the five-centuries old, still unresolved contradictions of capitalism that now faces an unfolding epochal crises, Horkheimer and Adorno (2002: xiv), at least in their time, were also faced with 'the present collapse of bourgeois civilization' and how the two of them set out in *c.*1942 'to explain why humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism'. This article dealt with some of the 'key conceptual tools of domination' whilst some characteristics thereof as experienced by the masses, were dealt with before (Engelbrecht 2014b).

What the Capitaloceneists and early Critical Theory seem to have in common, is that both, instead of just thinking about the world, but rather wanting to change it, realise that new theories fade long before they can, if at all, be implemented on a comprehensive and sustainable basis as *praxis*. In the

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meantime, the non-care bourgeois lifestyle that Horkheimer described and the apparent 'care-less lifestyle' (Lemmens and Hui 2017: 31) that currently prevail in the Capitalocene, is running up an ecological debt that is unlikely to be settled soon.

Furthermore, there are other themes in Horkheimer's writings up to 1931 that still resonate today. Pointing out only a few (in no particular order) will suffice. The materially structured society of Horkheimer's time is still not a resolved issue in 21st century social research. Indications are that considering capital as world-ecology in the web of life, might take us a few very important steps forward. Secondly, how Horkheimer viewed domination and the regress of the world into 'new forms of barbarism' remains equally unresolved. Here, Moore deals with the concept of capitalism as world-ecology to shed new light on this issue (and many others).Although he has 'little patience with grand theory' (Moore 2015: 11), the does regard world-ecology as a 'framework for theorizing those strategic bundles of relations fundamental to capitalist civilization' (Moore 2015: 42, 28). Thirdly, the description of what Horkheimer called a capitalist bourgeois epoch, is under re-interpretation, and rightly so, in view of capital's epochal crises today. Moore on the other hand, describes the *oikeios* in which the web of life functions in the biosphere. How Horkheimer identified and described human relations with fellows and with nature, seem not to have resulted in near-final outcomes, small wonder that today Moore proposes the concept of 'double internality'. There is also ample material in Horkheimer's writings that need analysis against the backdrop of this concept. Both Horkheimer and Adorno dealt extensively with the lack of enlightened outcomes of human *praxis* in their time. Similarly, Moore points at 'the violence and inequality of modernity and coming to terms with a way of organising life—not just between humans, but between humans and the rest of nature—in a way that is emancipatory'(Velednitsky 2017: 4). Interestingly, both Horkheimer and Moore have on not a few occasions, written about life that is badly organised. This needs attention. But there is a further unresolved theme: irrationality. Horkheimer and Moore are clear about aspects of the irrational composition of for instance work, value, science or power. Lastly, Horkheimer promoted interdisciplinary study, as does Moore. Horkheimer wanted to employ philosophers, sociologists, economists, historians and psychologists (Horkheimer 1993: 8). The difference is Moore's scope, Raj Patel correctly summed up, as 'vast'. Moore draws on 'environmental and economic history, world history, and world-systems analysis, political ecology and critical human geography, Marxist feminism, global political economy, agro-food and critical development studies, and many, many more' (Moore 2015: xiv). Both were keen to break out of the limitations of traditional language: for instance, Adorno and Horkheimer (2011: 45) wrote that 'Human beings do things in a far more terrible way than animals' whilst Moore wrote that 'Humans build empires on their own as much as beavers build dams on their own. Both are "ecosystem engineers"' (Moore 2015: 7). But Horkheimer and Moore also have in common how capitalism accumulates wealth. Horkheimer (1978: 17) wrote about 'the key conceptual techniques of domination', and according to Moore: 'accumulated wealth

exists only for the purpose of generating more wealth. That is very fraught because you have to continually find new places to invest your capital' (Moore 2017: 3). This needs further investigation.

What essentially started off in this paper as a superficial investigation about Horkheimer's early views of the German bourgeoisie, ended at an unintended level. Horkheimer's examination and re-examinations of social, economic and philosophical themes, pre-date an anachronistic world because the division of the world into geo-ideological blocs, is not what Horkheimer and most of his contemporaries expected in the early years of the Institute. The suggestion is that his critical thought about the bourgeoisie and 'progress' against perceived reality of 'unlimited possibilities', the turn science took at the expense of the individual and freedom, how reason and a better humanity were conflicted and that cultural advancement was turned into its opposite – barbarism – are indicative of regression and not steps towards enlightenment. The promises of post-1945 modernization interpretations, have not survived.

Early in the 20th century, it seems unlikely that a state of enlightenment would have been achievable in the near future in view of the near-collapse of social phenomenon in Germany under the rise of positivist thought, the questionable purpose of bourgeois science, and the self-destructive rise of fascism. When the bourgeois turned language in to its opposition, namely propaganda, meant for Horkheimer, less freedom because the bourgeoisie in so doing compromised the individual and possibilities for an enlightened life. Similarly for Moore, a better 'way of organising life', would be 'in a way that is emancipatory' (Moore 2017: 4). Such hope is based on the 'likely demise of Cheap Nature today […]' where '[c]apitalism will give way to another model–or models–over the next century' (Moore 2015: 294).

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